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SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD

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TAGS: [IS](#) [KMDR](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#) [REPORT](#)
SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:

[11. Disengagement](#)

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[13. U.S. - Israel Relations](#)

Key stories in the media:

Disengagement issues: Yediot quoted Gush Katif settlers as saying that the extremists that are confronting soldiers and causing trouble do not represent them and that the IDF should have kicked them out when they were fewer in number.

Yediot reported on a dramatic turnaround in the Palestinian stance regarding the houses in Gush Katif -- the P.A. is now refusing to clear the rubble that would remain should Israel follow through with plans to demolish these structures.

Yediot cited P.A.'s National Security Advisor Jibril Rajoub as saying that during the disengagement, 5,000 Palestinian policemen will surround the evacuated settlements in order to prevent terror and plunder. Yediot reported that Bethlehem would be transferred to Palestinian control this weekend.

Jerusalem Post headlined that according to sources in Washington, the administration is considering giving Israel USD 1 billion in a post-disengagement aid package to develop the Negev and the Galilee.

All media covered the silent demonstration that was organized by the Yesha Council on Monday. According to the organizers, 40,000 cars took part in the protest but according to Yediot only 2,000 cars participated. All media reported that the police and other security forces are getting ready for the "real" demonstration that is expected to take place on Wednesday mobilizing the more extreme groups of settlers. Many roads are expected to be blocked. Ha'aretz reported that dozens of psychologists will accompany policemen and IDF soldiers in the coming month and during the disengagement pullout in order to help them cope with the situation. Ha'aretz reported that only settlers who will willingly evacuate their houses will be eligible for trailers in the temporary neighborhood in Nitzan.

Maariv published parts of an interview held with IAF Commander, Eliezer Shkedi, in which he said that the Russian Anti-Aircraft missiles are about to arrive in Syria.

All media reported that an IDF soldier was convicted of the manslaughter of Tom Hurndall, a British peace activist in 2003.

The media reported that a Syrian soldier opened fire on an IDF patrol near the border with Israel in the Golan Heights on Monday. IDF Radio this morning reported that Syria denied the shooting.

Ha'aretz reported that Housing Minister Isaac Herzog has told the ministerial committee on settlements that construction work in 50 settlements has been suspended. Ha'aretz reported that the U.S. administration is demanding Israel's prompt signature in an agreement to install and operate monitoring systems at the Haifa Port.

Jerusalem Post reported that USAID denies allegations made by Palestinian Media Watch (PMW), an Israeli group that claims that money directed for P.A. university campuses helped the Hamas.

11. Disengagement:

Summary:

Conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized: "Whether refusal comes from ideology or ignorance, our society must defend itself not only by punishing the perpetrators, but by maintaining the stigma against political refusal and bolstering democratic values through civic education."

Block Quotes:

"The Courage to Defend Democracy"

Conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized (June 28): "Political refusal is nothing to be proud of, and both sides know it. Disengagement opponents who are now blithely urging refusal were the first to be appalled at left-wing calls to refuse to serve in the territories.... The refuser, more than advancing his own cause, is undermining the institutions on which we all depend for our lives, our security, and our existence.... Whether refusal comes from ideology or ignorance, our society must defend itself not only by punishing the perpetrators, but by maintaining the stigma against political refusal and bolstering democratic values through civic education. Defenders of democracy need as much courage, tenacity and creativity as those who, deliberately or through ignorance, would undermine what we must all hold most dear."

12. Iran:

Summary:

Senior Arab affairs commentator Zvi Barel wrote in independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz: "The Iranian public did not 'betray' Washington in last week's elections. It simply remained an Iranian public that first considers its government's internal policy, its economic situation and its national pride."

Block Quotes:

"Not a Betrayal"

Senior Arab affairs commentator Zvi Barel wrote in independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz (June 28): "The Iranian public did not 'betray' Washington in last week's elections. It simply remained an Iranian public that first considers its government's internal policy, its economic situation and its national pride. It did not elect the man who let it down over the past eight years or promised new relations with America, but the man who promised jobs for 30 percent of the unemployed and welfare programs for the poor -- just as any public anywhere else in the world does. Furthermore, the reformists did not have an election promise from Bush that they could wave around and vow that the United States would change its policy toward Iran if the president was elected from among them. In fact, Washington, which is now so frightened by the results of the election, did not do much at all to bolster the reformists over the past eight years, thus allowing Russia, China, India and Pakistan to become stronger allies and wield a greater influence over Iran. Is Iran more frightening than ever now? Not necessarily. Iran is not an insane state, and its citizens, despite the oppression, know how to rally the street into action when things are bad for them. They were the ones who elected more liberal representatives as a result of their disappointment with the representatives of the revolution; and they are the ones who changed the government now."

13. U.S. - Israel Relations:

Summary:

Diplomatic correspondent Aluf Benn wrote in

independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz: "China is not a godforsaken outpost in Samaria, and if the Americans are anxious about it, they expect Israel to act accordingly and not do whatever it fancies -- or else it will be at the receiving end of sanctions and threats, until it gets the message and promises good behavior."

Block Quotes:

"China is Not an Outpost"

Diplomatic correspondent Aluf Benn wrote in independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz (June 28): "The current crisis in the military relations with the United States could have been prevented, had the military establishment evinced a willingness to change. Its conservatism and narrow horizons led to the clash with the Pentagon, and Israel will now sign a 'surrender agreement,' and will also apparently bid farewell to some senior people at the Defense Ministry.... In the relations between Israel and the United States, there is a 'triangle of interests.' The Americans accept Israel's primacy on the Palestinian issue, which is perceived as essential for Israel. Their policy is coordinated with dictates from Jerusalem, and they turn a blind eye to the Jewish settlements in the territories and the outposts. Beyond the Jordan River and the desert, in relations with Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan, they take Israel's concerns into consideration and restrain sales of weapons to Arab armies. But Asia is an American playing field. China is not a godforsaken outpost in Samaria, and if the Americans are anxious about it, they expect Israel to act accordingly and not do whatever it fancies -- or else it will be at the receiving end of sanctions and threats, until it gets the message and promises good behavior."

KURTZER